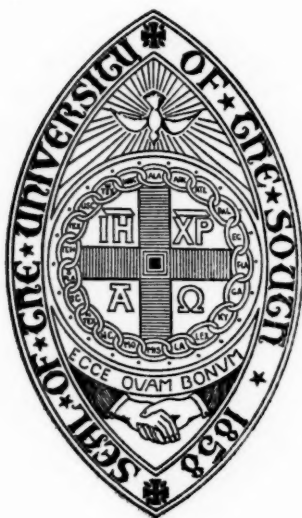


# The Saint Luke's Journal



VOLUME V

NUMBER 1

ST. LUKE'S DAY, 1961

School of Theology  
The University of the South  
Sewanee, Tennessee

# The Saint Luke's Journal of Theology

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ST. LUKE'S DAY

NUMBER I

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## CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

- God Is Marching Through the Fields . . . *Massey H. Shepherd, Jr.* 3  
Toward a Demythologisation of Church . . . . . *John M. Gessell* 10  
An Approach to Christian Eschatology . . . . . *Terrell T. Kirk* 16

### BOOK NOTES

- The New English Bible* . . . . . 28  
*Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins* . . . . . 29  
*The Gospel According to Thomas* . . . . . *J. H. W. Rhys* 30  
Associate Professor of New Testament  
*Tournier, A Doctor's Casebook in the Light of the Bible*  
*George M. Alexander* 32  
Dean, School of Theology  
*Johnson, Psychology of Religion* . . . . . *Vesper O. Ward* 33  
Professor of Christian Education and Homiletics  
*Bouyer, Liturgical Piety* . . . . . *Wilford O. Cross* 34  
Professor of Ethics, Nashotah House  
*Pelikan, The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* . . . . . *J. H. W. Rhys* 35  
*Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom* . . . . . *J. H. W. Rhys* 36

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### *A Note to Subscribers*

Technical difficulties, in particular the illness of the manager of our Press, prevented us from producing the double-length issue on the Arts and Religion, which had been projected for June 1961 to do duty for the Epiphany and Commencement issues. All subscriptions paid last year are to be counted as paid in full for 1961-62, and the material of the issue on the Arts and Religion is already being made ready for a large Epiphany issue this year. We shall also publish an issue for Commencement, and we thank our subscribers for their patience.

*The Editorial Committee*

## GOD IS MARCHING THROUGH THE FIELDS

*By MASSEY HAMILTON SHEPHERD, JR.*

There is a French song for the feast of Corpus Christi called "The Procession," well-known in the musical setting of Cesar Franck. It is a romantic piece whose sensuous images evoke in us a haunting memory as it were of a distant and bygone world—an image of faithful village folk with their priests mingling the melody of chant with the voices of birds, the smells of heather and flowers, the warming sights of verdant fields and setting suns. Before them goes the canopied, golden monstrance that encloses visibly the mysterious sacrament of the Presence of God to hallow and to bless the rhythm of seedtime and of harvest, of birth and death and resurrection of nature and of man. The opening and the closing lines of this sacred song are nonetheless arresting:

Dieu s'avance à travers les champs!  
God is marching through the fields!

God is in the fields—in the fields of the world! He is not standing still, He is marching, advancing in procession, preparing in inscrutable providence unimagined harvests of recreation through the toil and labor, the hope and fear and faith of generations.

Today on countless academic platforms this vision is being renewed, whether recounted in religious or secular imagery, to candidates of graduation amidst the formal congratulations and prophecies that are customary rituals of such occasions. To the young men here who now receive their diploms we also extend our sincere and candid congratulations. In these contemporary years, we trust that such congratulations and good wishes bear more than a conventional turn, for they must temper optimistic hopes with starkly realistic portents. For to you, young men, is given one of history's rare and select favors: to be a witness and participant in a fundamental transition in the adventures of the world. And this transition is not of our Western world only, but embraces and interacts with a primary upheaval that enfolds the ancient cultures of the Orient and the native and acquired cultures of the continents and isles of the southern hemisphere. God is marching

through the fields towards horizons unsearchable and incomprehensible. Yet the signs of these horizons are by now sufficiently distinct and clear.

Each prophet and seer reads these signs with his own vocabulary, his own emphasis, his own spiritual gift of insight. Yet the several readings of the signs of the time converge upon the definition of values that must guide us through the crisis of transition and change. Is it too much to ask of you, young men—you who are the heirs of a humane, liberal, and Christian education—to take your share of responsibility to be both alert to the signs and open to the values of these new horizons which are the very promises of God? Will you refuse the venture of faith and obedience for the false security of comfort and prejudice which is but the prison of fear? If like the pagans we choose to live “without God in the world,” then indeed we shall live—and die—without hope. And we can choose. History is not determined. God respects our freedom of choice, but He also reserves His sovereign right of judgment. God marches on—through the fields and furrows where we plant and reap, where indeed we are ourselves reaped.

The eminent theologian of Tübingen, Monsignor Romano Guardini, has written a modern apocalypse which he entitles “The End of the Modern World,” in which he warns us of the ominous danger to human freedom in the emerging era of the mass man, from the circumstance that man has now been given power over the forces of nature all out of proportion to his control of himself and his own innate powers. Writing in the middle 40’s amidst the ruins of his country, he expressed what must be obvious to us all now: “the situation may well overwhelm humanity, not merely its weaker members but precisely those most active, its organizers, its leaders, its conquerors. During the last two decades we have witnessed the first monstrous instances. . . . Again and again one is haunted by the fear that in the final analysis only violence will be used in an effort to solve the flood of problems which threaten to engulf humanity. . . . All the abysses of primeval ages yawn before man. . . . He stands again before chaos, a chaos more dreadful than the first because most men go their own complacent ways without seeing, because scientifically-educated gentlemen everywhere deliver their speeches as always, because the machines are running on schedule and because the authorities function as usual.”

These apocalyptic words are of our own generation. But over fifty years ago, G. K. Chesterton gave us the same warning in his litany:

From all that terror teaches,  
From lies of tongue and pen,  
From all the easy speeches  
That comfort cruel men,  
From sale and profanation  
Of honour, and the sword,  
From sleep and from damnation,  
Deliver us, good Lord!

The poet and the seer are no more disturbing than the well-known critic and interpreter of the arts, Mr. Herbert Read. "For nearly two centuries," he writes in his lecture "Society and Culture," "the great cultural tradition we inherited from the European Renaissance has been losing substance—losing substance in the literal sense of plastic concreteness. During these two centuries there has been great music, great poetry, but no great architecture—or only an exquisite diminuendo of Rococo elegances, Classical refinements and Gothic re-creations. There have been a few great painters, but they have been individualists, without organic relationship to the social organism. The crafts have declined, the indigenous folk arts of all civilized countries have disappeared, and what we have in the place of great architecture, of architectural painting and Sculpture, and of the fine crafts functionally associated with great architecture, are the mass-produced, insensitive fabrications of the machine along with it characteristic by-products—centralization, slums, social neurosis, a devitalized proletariat, a de-humanized intelligentsia."

Mr. Read is at pains to remind us that there is a distinction between civilization and culture, and, with a greater optimism, asserts that culture is not dependent upon "a distinctive civilization to support it." For this statement he cites the culture of the Jews as an example—and a very significant example it is indeed. A materialistic civilization whose standard of living is but a wealth of creature-comforts may be sacrificed—indeed it must be sacrificed if it stifles the zest in life for creative adventure. Excessive comfort breeds only an inordinate desire for security, which in turn issues in boredom. When that happens, decadence and downfall are inevitable.

So it was with ancient Roman civilization, and the parallelism between its decline and our own age is become almost a fashion in comparative historiography. Such parallels have their fallacies no less than their lessons. But the transition from the ancient to the medieval world is in any case the most obvious era in which we can see

mirrored a perspective upon our own times. Whatever were the underlying biological, psychological, or sociological factors in the downfall of the Roman Empire, there were at least two immediate catalysts that hastened its disintegration: the barbarians and Christianity. And these two forces "in the process of dismantling the empire," as the late Professor Cochrane noted, "were associated rather than allied powers." One suspects that they are comparable forces in the dissolution of our contemporary Western civilization.

Both the barbarians without and the Christians within the ancient empire were outnumbered. Yet the barbarians defeated the Romans militarily, the Christians defeated them ideologically. Neither barbarians nor Christians deliberately planned this defeat or even consciously desired it. In fact, many Christians bemoaned it and wailed over it as the end of the world. The more perceptive, such as St. Augustine in the *City of God*, saw in the event no less than the providence of God. What the barbarians and the Christians shared in common was their refusal to accept the status quo as having any final validity, or to protect and preserve a way of life that left vast numbers of men bereft of justice and the chance of a better life under the sun.

We may bewail today, if we like, the long generations of cruelty and chaos of the so-called Dark Ages, as they groped fitfully and spasmodically towards the re-creation of order, the recovery of education and discipline, the reshaping of manners and taste. We may regret the fact that civilization has not again known either the extent or the duration of the *pax romana*, the Roman peace. Yet on a soberer thought, we would not exchange for these things the heroism and devotion that brought the Roman cultural heritage with the Christian gospel to the Celts, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the Magyars and the Slavs. The disappearance of the Rhine-Danube frontier between civilization and barbarism brought its own rewards.

When the Franks poured across the Rhine to inherit Caesar's conquest of Gaul, who would have imagined such a lineage as that which stemmed from Clovis to reach the magnanimity of a Charlemagne and the serene, manly holiness of St. Louis? When Pope Gregory, hard pressed to feed his flock against the marauding Lombards, sent his monks to England with only the armor of books and the banner of the Cross, did anyone foresee such fruit among the savage Anglo-Saxons as the Venerable Bede, and Alcuin and King Alfred? The secret of these triumphs of humanity was found by Mr. Christopher Dawson



in an inscription of one of Gregory's predecessors, Pope John III, which reads: "In a straightened age the Pope showed himself more generous and disdained to be cast down though the world failed."

In the perspective of history that is ours, can we dare to say that the long struggle for order out of chaos was not worth the miracle of the illuminated pages of the Book of Kells the plainchant melodies that soared through the vaults of Cluny and St. Denis, the architectonic logic that brought harmony to reason and revelation in the *Summa*? We would gladly exchange our comforts and conveniences if only to catch a glimpse of the rapture that penetrated to the very heart of the Divine Charity in the contemplation of Bernard of Clairvaux, the stigmata of Francis of Assisi, the "high fantasy" where Dante's power failed as

desire and will were turned  
Even as a wheel is equally moved  
By the Love that moves the sun and other stars.

God is marching through the fields! Young men, you no less than we, must surely hear today the cry of the barbarian throughout the world—all the more raucous from the din of weapons and machines which we have placed in their hands. But in the tumult and the shouting we may hear, too, the heart pulse beating hopefully, expectantly for a better life, a larger justice, a humane acceptance. For this also has been stirred by our giving, and it would ill become us to deny it, much less to attempt to take it back. Nor can we, even if we would. No material force, and surely no shallow doctrinaire opinion—no slogans of prejudice: For Westerners Only, For Gentiles Only, For Whites Only—can stop the generative power of great and true ideas and ideals. We are blind, utterly blind indeed, if we do not see in the ferment of our times the provident work of God, bringing to larger fruition the very good news He has honored us with bearing to the far corners of the earth.

However corrupted has been our witness, as is all human enterprise, by pride and selfishness—and for our sins we shall in due time make reparation—the fact remains that for over a hundred years we have raised the standard of liberty and justice and the dignity of man, whether in the classic documents of our secular democracy or by the personal evidence of the Christian missionary. We should not be surprised therefore to see the underprivileged and the outcast rise up

at last to claim their heritage. Far from shrinking in fear and terror at the awesome dimensions of this revolution, we should rather give thanks unto Him who

is working His purpose out  
As year succeeds to year.

In his prophetic address last December to the assembly of the National Council of Churches, Bishop Lesslie Newbigin of the Church of South India said: "We shall not ask 'What is coming to the world?' because we know who is coming. We shall not think of our task as one of trying to hold back the revolution of our time, but as one of bearing witness within that revolution to its true meaning. We shall not allow ourselves to be so obsessed by the fear of communism that we can see nothing else. Communism is not the author of the revolution of our time; it is one of the movements which exploits it; the revolutionary movement of our time has deeper roots and a wider meaning than communism understands. Our privilege as Christians is to understand its real meaning. The penalty of allowing our judgment to be controlled by the fear of communism is that we may find ourselves defending injustice against the human cry for justice, and tyranny against the cry for freedom. For civilization as for individuals, the beginning of wisdom is to fear God more than we fear death or disaster or anything else."

God is marching through the fields! Our choices are obvious. We can join the procession or drop out of line. We may choose even to get in the way of it and try to obstruct it. But we shall not stop it. It will go over us or around us. God does not call us to succeed—success in His affair—but only to be loyal. We may even be so placed in the line that we find it hard to make out how our marching serves the final goal of Him who leads. But, as Miss Jane Addams once said, "because each of us can do so little in the great task of regenerating society, it is therefore more necessary that each should dedicate his power and add his individual will to the undertaking."

God is marching through the fields! What kind of a leader is ours? Who is our God? Surely you, young men, should know—you who have had the inestimable privilege of an education in the best of our humane and Christian tradition, and have had it in an atmosphere where daily God is praised and supplicated in sacrament and prayer. The prophet has told us who is our God:

There shall come forth a root from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.  
And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.  
And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;  
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist,  
and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.  
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

Sometimes it happens that a cartoonist is a better interpreter of the Word than a preacher. Last December, during the strife in New Orleans, the San Francisco *Chronicle* published a cartoon that was a very Christian one indeed. It showed an angry, howling mob, faces twisted and distorted by hatred, fists upraised in coarse threats of violence. The object of their outburst was a little girl walking alone up the steps of a school. Her face was washed, her hair combed back in a bow-tied pigtail. She had a simple clean dress, with a flouncy little skirt, a big sash tied with another bow. Her socks were pulled up, her shoes shining. For all the world she looked like many another little girl of a mother's dutiful care, a father's proud hope. But her face happened to be black. The cartoonist put no words in his picture, but underneath wrote a sentence from the prophet:

"And a little child shall lead them."

## TOWARD A DE-MYTHOLOGISATION OF CHURCH

### THE NEW AGE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

*By* JOHN M. GESSELL

A distinction needs to be made at once between two types of terms which are used in relation to church, those of process and those of substance. Process terms are dynamic, verbal and operational and suggest the concrete nature of church in history. Substance terms are static, nounal, often abstract and stand in isolation from ongoing experience. A contrast lies here between the descriptive possibilities of the dynamics of experience on the one hand, and of the analogies of substance on the other. What follows is a brief attempt to indicate the nature of the problem in our language about the Church. It is by no means a definitively final statement, consisting as it does of a series of somewhat random comments.

#### THE NATURE OF THE TASK

I have no particular personal problem with the organic and biological analogues to church which are derived from the analogies of substance. This type of term is rooted in the New Testament figures of the "body of Christ" and of the "vine and branches." Both Pauline and Johannine figures are of unexceptional symbolic significance. Unfortunately, when pressed these figures appear to lend themselves to undergirding a kind of ecclesiological absolutism which T. O. Wedel has termed "catholic fundamentalism." Within this realm of discourse, the Church is held to be a divine institution in history, authorized to make absolute demands and to secure absolute guarantees. This kind of sacerdotalism is exemplified in the phrase "the Church is the extension of the Incarnation" which, identifying the institution church directly with Christ, assigns to the Church the saving functions of Christ.

These analogies of substance are based on New Testament experience, but I am convinced that the symbols need "de-mythologising" to avoid the dangers of ecclesiastical fundamentalism. The N. T. symbols are indeed particularly useful in expressing the essential relation between Christ and the faithful. L. S. Thornton manages this with

great effect in *The Common Life in the Body of Christ*.<sup>1</sup> While the symbols describe a dynamic relationship, however, such analogues can readily become reduced to propositional formulae which, in literalised form, compel assent to a static and inert view of church. So far as symbolic effect is concerned, the operational significance of church in the historical process is lost. Church becomes an agency requiring submission to itself rather than to its Lord.

This is in direct contrast to the understanding of church as a dynamic agency within history pointing men to the ultimate issues of their existence and offering to them the means of grace and power by which they can enter into obedience to God through Jesus as the Christ. While the latter view removes all hope of finding an automatic guarantee in an historical absolute it is none the less more nearly true to the N. T. understanding of church and its historical function.

It is probably more accurate to look upon the N. T. symbols for church more as metaphors than analogies. The intention of the writers is to describe the tension within existence which is felt by the Christian as he meets in Christ the almost unendurable relation between eternity and his own finitude. Where this tension is faced and entered into by the grace of Christ, there is the Church and the means of grace. At this point in experience we run against some further N. T. symbolic forms, most noteworthy of which are the "new age" and "the power of the Holy Spirit." Obviously, it will be known that by speaking of these as symbols we do not thereby rob them of reality and operational significance. We will examine these symbols below.

Church is the place where I am confronted by the Lord of Lords, where I can find myself and by the grace of God can be myself, where I experience the pain of new birth in Christ and, as the new creature, participate in His life and death and resurrection. Church is all this and unspeakably more. We are compelled, in this crucial experience, to forsake the mythological forms of catholic fundamentalism, the categories of substance which can so readily become irrelevant. We are driven toward the mythological forms of church which will bespeak its reality in operational terms through the dynamic categories of process and power. This appears to me to be appropriate in terms of the intention of the N. T. writers. Hence the task of de-mythologisation.

<sup>1</sup>Westminster: Dacre Press, 1941.

### THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In traditional theological language, church is the realisation of the presence of God's power, with all that implies. If we de-mythologise the symbols for church we can describe it as the mark of God's presence in terms of His constitutive power. It is constitutive in the sense that it is the ground of the possibility and fulfillment of the meaning of our existence. This meaning is symbolised in the faith community by the power of the presence of the Holy Spirit as a sign of the new age.

The first mark which can be described as the evidence of this power is the power of existence to become genuine and authentic as it was created to be. There is power in the moral life of those who are a part, and power in the Church to proclaim this Gospel—power to live and to act in truth and in that vocation to which we are called. There is the power to be in the world, but to find authentication from beyond the world.<sup>2</sup>

Power is the primary mark of God's presence amongst His people. But this kind of description can be seen to differ widely with the mythological forms based on organic analogies in which sacramental incorporation becomes at once the guarantee of authentic existence. On the contrary, the sacramental symbols in fact are descriptions of a relationship and are the bearers of power to those who are open to receive it. The difficulty with the absolutist views about church is that there is no room for critical judgment. Sacraments are said to bear an indelible grace. If we are willing to de-mythologise the symbols, however, we may see that the power of God's presence is itself a judgment on the pretensions of finite existence and its lack of self-authentication. This kind of power gives the lie to the neurotic and compulsive grasping for power. The power of God grasps and authenticates existence.

From this dynamic view of Church we can move to describe other marks of the presence of the Holy Spirit. One is the power to share. The N. T. proclaims the good news that all things are in common. The O. T. distinction between the sacred and the profane is at an end.<sup>3</sup> The mythological forms of church which involve absolute organic categories exhibit tendencies to revive this distinction, especially in the view of the sacraments. The revolutionary realisation in the N. T. is

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Swete, H. B., *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, London: Macmillan, 1921.

<sup>3</sup>See Thornton, *op.cit.*, Chap. I.

that all things are common, for they have been made new inasmuch as the creation has been "ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven," in the words of the hymn. Thus the community is revealed, not as an absolute within history, but as a covenant community in which all things are common. There is no distinction between anélite and the ordinary or disinherited.<sup>4</sup>

The community as a unique covenant community is another instance of the manifestation of indwelling power. It is the symbolic form of the realisation within existence of the relationship of the self to the ground of power and of meaning. The sharing in common is a definite ingredient of the structure of divine society. Underlying this structure, rooted both in time and eternity, is the covenant of God with His people. Rehearsed in the O. T., the covenant community of the N. T. in the body and blood of the incarnate Lord is the concrete manifestation of Jeremiah 31:31. It is not a "natural," but a divinely purposive community in which God and man meet decisively.<sup>5</sup> This is the point at which man's freedom is maintained, enhanced and, indeed, re-constituted in power.

It is in this connection that Fison observes in modern culture the failure of the viability of supernatural categories to communicate meaning. Thus, he notes,<sup>6</sup> we see in place of the dynamic interpretation of church in terms of power and covenant, an absolute mythology which leads inevitably to idolatry, apostasy and blasphemy. For the failure of creative thought about the Holy Spirit means man's idolatry of himself and the effacement of the Holy Spirit.

In the tension of time and eternity, the presence of the Holy Spirit in His Church is a binding force, holding man's existence together within the tension. This is expressed in terms of the dynamics of the process involved in confrontation and covenant. It is here that we realise the possibilities of genuine existence in its wholeness. By the power present and given to man, he may appropriate the meaning of his existence and enter into his true destiny, to discern and to participate in the community which bespeaks both creation and its redemption together with its meaning.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Cf., e.g., the Jewish notion of the *am ha'aretz* who were dispossessed, not by decision, but by fate. This is discussed by C. G. Montifiore in *The Synoptic Gospels*, London: Macmillan, 1909, Vol. II, pp. 480-1.

<sup>5</sup>See Dillistone, F. W., *The Structure of Divine Society*, Chap. 11.

<sup>6</sup>Fison, J. E., *The Blessing of the Holy Spirit*, Chap. IX.

<sup>7</sup>Cf., Dillistone, F. W., *The Holy Spirit in the Life of Today*.

The concern to de-mythologise the symbolic forms of church is here only suggested. There are many mythological structures which need examination. For example, the symbol "family" which is often used to describe a parish, is easily misappropriated. It is often true that the average parish can better be described, one clergyman points out, as a "stained glass jungle." At the root of this concern, however, is the reality of the life in the Church, a reality described by grace and power by the undwelling of the Holy Spirit.

#### LIFE IN THE NEW AGE

There is a second kind of operational or process term of significant value in describing church in its functional relation to our times. The N. T. speaks of life in the new age. Church can catch up the meaning of life within the tension of time and eternity and point as well to the possibilities of entering into the fulness of life at the moment of decision—*καιρός*.

The dynamic description of this life of meaning is suggested by St. John's phrase "full of grace and truth." Said of the incarnate Word, we participate also in this life through our adoption as sons. This is the full realization in our experience of the ultimate possibilities of finite existence in history, yet not entirely contained within history. Life in the new age goes "beyond history" in terms of its ground and meaning. Life in the new age is historical existence transformed by the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

All of this may be dramatised and reflected by the liturgical symbols of the Church. Holy Baptism becomes, not a means of salvation, but the dramatisation of rebirth in Christ to the overcoming of sin and the entrance into salvation. Holy Communion becomes, not a guarantee of God's power, but the dramatisation of the renewal of grace and truth at the meeting with God in Christ at the point (*καιρός*) of the offering (sacrifice) of our whole life.

Life in the new age is life in the truth, which is to say, in ultimate reality. Reference to St. John where "truth" is one of the key words, shows that we are dealing with an experience related to the facts (Greek root) and to that which is strong and permanent (Hebrew root). Life in the new age is life that is *ἐκ ἀληθείας*. Here "ἐκ" refers to the place or state of reality out of which one is brought as the source or origin of existence.\*

\*See Dodd's discussion in *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, pp. 176 ff.



Life in the new age is also life of grace. Grace as a dimension of power is a primary process symbol of church. Grace is the possibility from God to enter into genuine or authentic existence, to be "in the truth" where truth refers to the truth about one's own life.

All of this suggests that the de-mythologisation of church, and the recovery of symbols of a more viable and operational sort, permit us to rediscover church in its functional aspects in relation to our lives. After all, this is one of the primary achievements of any attempt at de-mythologisation—the recovery of symbolic forms which will truly relate our lives to ultimate reality in power and meaning. Thus, church is a place where "religion goes on;" religion in its primary meaning, as William Temple once pointed out, of the activity of making sense out of life where we are enabled to respond in faith to the Lord through commitment and trust.

The full and final realisation of the impact of the meaning of these symbols of life in the new age comes at a point where the processes of de-mythologisation and the recovery of viable symbolic forms makes revelation in its radical sense a genuine possibility. One of the major defects of ecclesiastical fundamentalism is that it substitutes sacramental theory for revelational reality. Revelation, grasped inwardly in appropriation and power, happens where church is the bearer of historical reality and of the symbols of dynamic truth. The revelation of the meaning of personal existence is a mark of the new age. "full of grace and truth." Whenever and wherever this occurs, we find the symbolic forms emerging de-mythologised. They become viable symbols of the reality of life within this dynamic process, rooted both in time and in eternity. Out of the pressure of the relation between revelation and the existing person the symbols are forged which interpret the meaning of the ultimate possibilities of life in the faith community of the Church of God.

## AN APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN ESCHATOLOGY

By TERRELL T. KIRK

This paper attempts to treat in brief and admittedly superficial, but it is hoped, suggestive form, some central aspects of Christian eschatology. This will not be an historical survey, tracing the development of eschatological teaching or delineating the various schools of thought. Rather it represents essentially the tentative results of a relatively superficial and limited survey of the treatment of eschatology in some recent works available in English.

For some centuries and until very recently eschatology has in most of the Church as distinguished from the sects, been regarded, if at all, as the vermiform appendix of theology. The sections on eschatology seemed to provide writers of theological texts a convenient place to dispose of the remnants of the fabric of revelation, so that the house might be tidied up. But, for practical purposes, eschatology was with decreasing ceremony passed by in favor of the humanist-evolutionary doctrines of progress that still shape the thinking of Western man. Eschatology, until very recently outside the stream of thought of most of the Church, was apparently regarded as fit material only for the disputations of the fundamentalists.

The shaking of the foundations of this un-eschatological theology was left to Albert Schweitzer, whose publication early in this century of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, demonstrated conclusively the centrality of eschatology to the teaching of Jesus. In a Church fashioned in the image of Jesus, the teacher of morality and the leader of progress toward the good society for good people, most did not recognize the sudden disclosure of their profound theological embarrassment, and many may still pretend not to hear. Though more recent and exacting scholarship has pointed out serious flaws in both Schweitzer's method and conclusions, his affirmation of the essential eschatological content of Jesus' message stands assured.

Schweitzer's study thus offered a most significant contribution to the great revitalization of theology in our century; for it must be contended that an appreciation of the Biblical eschatology is a mark by which theology as a whole stands or falls. Where the central

eschatological focus of the New Testament is eliminated or relegated to a place of minor significance, decadence of the Church's theology and life is an inevitable result, for the Christian faith is an eschatological faith, and stripped of its eschatology, the whole structure is rendered formless illusion.

Christianity began with the awareness that in Jesus Christ the end had come. In him the Kingdom of God had come among men, fulfilling the prophecies of Israel and the hopes of the ages. As Oscar Cullmann puts it,

"The New Testament regards the historical Christ and his work as the central event, the midpoint of time."<sup>2</sup>

The Church recognized itself to be an eschatological phenomenon, the new people of God living in the end time.<sup>3</sup> However long history may continue, and whatever may occur (on these points there appear to be differing strands of thought within the New Testament, as well as a broad spectrum of interpretations from the Patristic period to the present) on this there is no uncertainty: That in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead, the decisive victory has been won and the issue is no longer in doubt. The confession of the primitive Church, "Jesus Christ is Lord," proclaimed the certainty of faith that the outcome of history was in his hands and would be conformed to his will. Utter finality is not yet, but the configuration of the end has been set and thus the meaning revealed in Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup>

The Church lived as the new creation of the risen and reigning Lord Jesus, apart from whom she was "no people," but in whom she was "God's people." As Jesus had been crucified, dead and buried, and had been raised from the dead by the power of God to be designated both Lord and Christ, so the Church was those who had died with Christ and been raised as a new creation whose life was in Christ. Central to the New Testament is the union of Christ with his Church, which union is maintained by the Holy Spirit who bears unceasing witness to Christ in all members of his body, in all those men and women who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The Church saw itself to be humanly impossible and to be possible only by God's act of

<sup>2</sup>Cullmann, O., *The Christology of the New Testament*, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup>Bultmann, R., *The Presence of Eternity*, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup>Fison, J. E., *The Christian Hope*, p. 61. On this point Fison notes his agreement with C. H. Dodd and T. W. Manson.

overthrowing the structure of human society which is frankly stated to lie "in the power of the evil one." In the Church the human "walls of partition" were broken down, to exist no longer as grounds of separation but as members of a new corporate unity in Christ. By the creation of a manifest unity incorporating Jew and Greek, bond and free, male and female, witness was borne in the "last days" to the fact of Jesus' divine mission in unity with the Father.

Jesus had come proclaiming the Kingdom of God. The Apostolic proclamation, on the other hand, was of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead; while the Kingdom of God was characteristically spoken of as the inheritance of the saints. This crucial distinction in the proclamation signifies the Church's recognition that Jesus was himself supremely the Kingdom of God, and that the Church was not the Kingdom but rather the divinely ordained sign of the Kingdom.<sup>4</sup> "The primary reference in the teaching of Jesus [concerning the Kingdom of God] is to the sovereign rule of God rather than to the community or realm over which he reigns."<sup>5</sup> But, "the Kingdom of God implies a community;" it "presupposes the Church,"<sup>6</sup> which serves "to gather men into obedience to the rule of redemptive love, in unity with Jesus in his obedience" and which has "the mission to announce and embody this in the new age which had dawned."<sup>7</sup>

The teaching of Jesus and the Apostolic *kerygma* are at one in their basic eschatological outlook, that "within the present evil aeon, eschatological existence consists in suffering," but in the age to come issues in glory.<sup>8</sup> The Kingdom in the teaching of Jesus involved the cross.<sup>9</sup> which, with the resurrection, "is the decisive event which sets the eschatological process in motion."<sup>10</sup> As the Kingdom was present in Jesus, it is misleading to say that he died to bring the Kingdom in. Rather he died in fulfillment of the vocation which the Kingdom must have in the present age, that of the Suffering Servant of the Lord. In his death our Lord,

"manifested the Kingdom that had come with him and made it possible for men to avail themselves of its power."

<sup>4</sup>Fison, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>5</sup>Roberts, Harold, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God*, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>8</sup>Robinson, James M., *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus*, pp. 121-25.

<sup>9</sup>Roberts, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>10</sup>Fuller, R. H., *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus*, p. 107.

"He committed himself at every stage to God's Rule, so that through his sacrifice of obedience men might end their rebellion and become reconciled to God and his purpose for their lives.

The cross is thus not a condition of the coming of the Kingdom, but the Kingdom itself coming with power."<sup>11</sup>

The Kingdom has come, yet it is always coming. That the earthly ministry of Jesus culminating in his death and resurrection is decisive there can be no disputing within Christian theology. Further, there is the consensus of the Church that now, the present, is the time of the Church's mission to the world, proclaiming the gospel that men might repent and believe. This is the time of opportunity, inviting decision on the basis of what has happened.<sup>12</sup> While the meaning of the decisive event is closed to those who remain spectators, it is open to those who in responsible decision will to become participants in that life which is seen in Christ; so hope is for the Christian, not for making Christians.<sup>13</sup> The Christian hope, Kummel writes, "is based on the assurance that adherence to Jesus is adherence to the coming Kingdom already at work;"<sup>14</sup> for "the eschatological character of the present is in the person of Jesus."<sup>15</sup>

Since this is the time for proclamation and decision regarding the Kingdom, it cannot be denied that the Kingdom is present and that it is not wholly future. On the other hand, in the words of Hebrews (11:8), which may strike us as sublime understatement, "As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to Him." It should be abundantly obvious to all that this world as it is or as it gives any promise of becoming is not the Kingdom of God. Nor can the Church or any other institution be regarded as being the fulfillment of God's intention. Yet, how can the Kingdom in an obviously ungodly world, and Church, be present as operative reality and not solely as anticipation? If the Kingdom were entirely future the very existence of the primitive church as distinguished from Judaism, which also had great expectations, would be inexplicable. The Church of the New Testament was confidently yet humbly aware that by the grace of God it had been brought from

<sup>11</sup>Roberts, op. cit., pp. 41-2, for direct quotations. Roberts and Fuller, op. cit., p. 77, for the statement introducing the quotations.

<sup>12</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>14</sup>Kummel, W. G., *Promise and Fulfillment*, p. 153.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 152.

death to life as a new order of being, the sons of God; yet at the same time she said, "It does not yet appear what we shall be." (I John 3:2).

But from the same writers (there are of course, many other such references) we receive clues to the problem of both present and future. In Hebrews, the sequel, "But we see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honor," (11:9), gives true direction for an understanding of the present. For as we see Jesus, we see the reality of the Kingdom for which worldly evidence is lacking or deceptive. And as for the future, we are governed neither by speculation nor by logic,<sup>19</sup> but by the *parousia* of the Lord, as John writes: "But we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:2b) The shape of the future is seen in him who has come; thus the meaning of the future is defined not so much by *what* is coming or when, but by the *One who* comes to meet us.<sup>20</sup> This future is the consummation of the work of Christ, not a product of human effort or of natural process. Cullman states it:

"For as early Christianity understands it, faith in the present Christ and the Christ who is coming again presupposes that New Testament perspective in which the decisive thing has already happened in the incarnate Jesus, but the consummation is yet to come."<sup>21</sup>

We must in order to maintain the New Testament perspective give full stress to the fact of the initiative of God, to his prevenient grace, expressed in the incarnate Lord, as the governing factor not only at the beginning, but also in the present and at the end. Richard R. Niebuhr points out, in criticism of the use of *Heilsgeschichte* both in the sense of the utter transcendence of God's saving acts, as in the theology of Karl Barth, and in the sense of the independence of temporal history seen in the *eschatological Now* experienced exclusively within the consciousness of Bultmann's solitary exister, that

"*Heilsgeschichte* as a concept threatens the essential, animating paradox of the incarnation and all Christian history, that that, which is the supreme interpretation of all that has gone before and is to come, is itself a participant in the travail of history."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>21</sup>Fison, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>20</sup>Cullmann, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>22</sup>Niebuhr, Richard, *Resurrection and Historical Reason*, p. 87.

In the risen Lord was seen at once and inseparably both the reality of the incarnation and the triumph of grace. It is this resurrection faith that is the fulcrum on which the whole of New Testament theology is balanced.<sup>20</sup> The resurrection faith is faith in God who has revealed himself as sovereign love, thus as the One who is ultimate Ruler of all, yet whose rule is perfect freedom, freedom even to defy that love. This understanding must govern our further study.

Because God has revealed Himself as love there is no unambiguous or coercive testimony to his revelation. Yet because he is sovereign, his love is operative in all creation, and to those who have responded with faith to the revelation, receiving it as decisive for themselves, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:5) The presence in the life of the Christian of the Holy Spirit, who does not advertise Himself but testifies to Christ, is a foretaste and guarantee of the consummation to come in the *parousia*. So the mode of the Christian life is not so much that of the soul's pilgrimage as that of the prevenient grace of God who comes to us.<sup>21</sup> It is the Lord who is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, to whom the Spirit bears witness, who is to come, and whose appearing (*parousia*) is the basis of eschatological understanding. The meaning of the end is not to be found in categories of logical necessity, of natural law, or of moral achievement, but in the Lord who comes.

The Church has from her birth lived and will until the end live in the well-nigh unbearable tension of the Kingdom which has come and yet is coming, whose victory has been decided yet is to be consummated. To attempt to resolve the tension either by vainly imagining that more ambitious effort on our part would bring the consummation, or by contenting ourselves with the world as it is, toning down the victory to the paler colors of "progress" or "piety," is to fail to be the Church.<sup>22</sup> As the Church we are called to live in the unimaginable tension of the "moment" between the resurrection and the *parousia*. We cannot understand the ethics, worship or doctrine of the early Church apart from their context in the eschatological tension of joy, expectancy and humble confidence which characterized her life.<sup>23</sup> Her ethic of love, rather than of law and moralism, as well as her doctrine

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>21</sup>Fison, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>22</sup>Bright, John, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 242-43.

<sup>23</sup>Fison, op. cit., p. 36.

of prevenient grace, of God's justifying the ungodly, are falsified when removed from their eschatological matrix.

But it is through the Church's worship of her Lord that we may most fruitfully approach her eschatological consciousness, for her personal and corporate experience of meeting with the Lord in worship, her mystical union with him, was determinative of her ethic and her doctrine. Her worship was supremely eschatological, being both present union, with the risen Lord and anticipation of his coming. Cullman writes,

"Thus we can understand that this ancient prayer *Maranatha* meant, for those who spoke it, both, 'Lord, come at the end to establish thy Kingdom,' and 'Come now while we are gathered at this meal.' Those who came together for worship may hardly have been conscious of the theological and theoretical distinction we make between present and future, anticipation and future coming. For them both elements were so intimately related that in the experience of Christ's presence in worship they really experienced in anticipation his final return. When we speak of the early Church's eschatology, we should consider more than is usually done that the early church not only waited for 'eschatological realization,' but already experienced it—precisely in the eucharistic meals. Christian worship is worship in *pneuma* (John 4:23), an eschatological element.

"[Christ's] lordship is already experienced every time the little community celebrate the Lord's Supper. Thus the Church appears in reality as the centre of Christ's lordship over the whole world. The typical juxtaposition of Church worship and the coming Kingdom of God in the whole thought of the early Church shows that the ancient prayer *Maranatha* really means at the same time both the presence of Christ today and his coming again."<sup>24</sup>

In this context we may see the serious failure of doctrines of the Eucharist oriented almost entirely toward the past. The Real Presence is not of One whom we recall out of the past—it is the coming of the One who was, and is, and is to come. Both Baptism and the Eucharist are "sacraments of an inaugurated eschatology," expressing the fact that "the *eschaton* has entered history and yet the 'end' is still awaited," that "the Christ has come and yet is still to come."<sup>25</sup> Christian Baptism is the application to the individual of the death of Christ.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>25</sup>Clark, Neville, *An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 80.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 82, quoting J. A. T. Robinson.



"The baptized man has died and yet he is still 'of the flesh'; he has risen and yet he awaits resurrection, he has been made to sit with Christ 'in the heavenly places,' yet his appearance in glory tarries till the coming of his Lord."<sup>77</sup>

The truth of our existence is again seen in the paradoxical tension between the "already" and the "not yet," between baptism and the *parousia*, so that to resolve the paradox is to destroy the truth. In this tension we see the significance of the Eucharist, for though by baptism we were incorporated into the body of Christ, there remains the distinction between this, his mystical body, and his ascended body, though the distinction does not permit separability. But "in the end there is one body . . . and in the Eucharist . . . the foretaste of the consummation is given and the fulfillment ever and again anticipated."<sup>78</sup> The worship of the Church is her meeting with her Lord in fervant expectation of that coming which is to be both "the revelation of the sons of God" and "the revelation of Jesus Christ."<sup>79</sup> Thus the liturgy of the Church is seen as both reflection and anticipation of the liturgy of heaven.<sup>80</sup>

The mystical union of the Church with her Lord sustains her in the present, nourishing her in a hope that is not fanaticism, but rather, that manifests itself in love.<sup>81</sup> Though for the sake of his servants the Master must be absent, yet he is mysteriously present, present sacramentally, present in the Spirit, in the Word, and, to our constant surprise, in the least of the brethren.<sup>82</sup> "We do not enter the door of Christian hope by accepting inherited doctrines of the Second Coming, but by being transformed into heirs through the death and resurrection of Christ." This hope is free of a spurious otherworldliness or this-worldliness, for Christ breaks the division of the worlds and establishes the unity of daily duties and ultimate issues.<sup>83</sup> "The inner unity of Christian ethics, both other-worldly and yet thankfully accepting and freely using all gifts of the Creator, is given by the eschatological conception of correspondence between the first and last things" as that

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>79</sup>Robinson, J. A. T., *The Body*, p. 82.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid. Shepherd, M. H., Jr., *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse*, and Dix, Gregory, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, *passim*.

<sup>81</sup>Fison, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>82</sup>Minear, Paul S., *Christian Hope and the Second Coming*, p. 102.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., pp. 207-8.

correspondence is manifested in Christ, and thus opposes both asceticism and ecclesiastical world dominion or cultural optimism.<sup>84</sup> The ministry of Christ through his Church is both a sign of the end and a means to the coming of the end. "The Church on earth is called into existence as the eschatological community, in which the will of the Creator is brought to realization,"<sup>85</sup> yet she cannot of herself bring about the realization, but hares in the subjection of all creation in hope.

The content of the Christian hope is Christ. As Paul Minear suggests, we might better speak of "Christ our Hope" than of "the Christian hope."<sup>86</sup> If there have been those wondering why, in a paper on eschatology, I should be so long neglectful of such traditional subject matter as resurrection and immortality, intermediate states, the last judgment, heaven and hell, the reason is here precisely stated: That the content of eschatology is defined by the person of Christ, not by such categories, whether they be regarded as spatio-temporal or metaphorical. It is the Lord, and no creature, who is the Beginning and the End; therefore the end cannot be approached other than through him who is the End. Our questions, however urgent, as to what and when and how must be recognized as always subsidiary to the question, "Who?" And, in fact, while the Church was called into being through the answer to the personal question, her appropriation of answers to the other questions is most uncertain. Further, it would appear that the more insistent our asking those questions, the greater our confusion (and greatest of all when we assume we have the answers in detail); for the really urgent question is the one to which we are given an unequivocal answer. C. H. Dodd has written, "Nothing awaits us in contradiction to what Christ disclosed at his first coming."<sup>87</sup>

Here we are brought to face with seriousness of our decision, not about any peripheral matter, but on the central question of the personal meaning of Jesus Christ for ourselves, in view of the last judgment.<sup>88</sup> This present decision determines the eschatological verdict.<sup>89</sup> Yet the judgment is not to be seen in terms of man's pilgrimage, but of God's coming to the soul; for we cannot properly imagine that the prevenient

<sup>84</sup>Dahl, N. A., "Christ, Creation and the Church," p. 440.

<sup>85</sup>*ibid.*, p. 440.

<sup>86</sup>Minear, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>87</sup>Dodd, C. H., *The Coming of Christ*, p. 31.

<sup>88</sup>Kummel, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>89</sup>*ibid.*, p. 142.

grace of God which has been heretofore shall suddenly cease. The essential irrelevance and falsity of the concept of purgatory appears in the realization that justification by faith is not to be reversed at the end by justification by works. There is in the end no acquiring in our own right of worthiness to share the vision of God, as if it had been in the presence of some other we had dwelt all our earthly days. In the judgment our only security is God's mercy and forgiveness, which is the eschatological significance of justification by faith.<sup>40</sup> This judgment and justification are present realities and will in the end be made final by the Lord who both judges and justifies.

But again, the primary reality of eschatology is not judgment, but *parousia*, the appearing in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. This coming is in the New Testament the focus of hope, not fear.<sup>41</sup> The later development of the idea of God as the sternly just distributor of rewards and penalties, and of his grace as something acquired rather than freely given, is a distinct departure from the New Testament.<sup>42</sup> The *parousia* is not to be thought of as sheer finality, issuing in inactivity or a rather bland blessedness, but as looking forward, inaugurating the consummation which is not a proposition of logic but a meeting of love.<sup>43</sup> In the *parousia* we are to be met with indescribable possibilities, as the love of God initiates in man a response, a mutuality, of which we have not heretofore been remotely capable.<sup>44</sup> This beatific meeting is to be not the end, but in fact the beginning,<sup>45</sup> as appears to be the sense of I Corinthians 15:23-24.

"But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power."

The consequences of the *parousia* cannot be contained, but are in their very nature, as the fulfillment of the love of God, greater than all possible expectation, filled with the prodigal surprise of the love that is without limit. Certainly the redemption envisioned is cosmic, in-

<sup>40</sup>Fison, op. cit., pp. 76, 226.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>42</sup>Kelly, J. N. D., *Early Christian Doctrines*, p.460.

<sup>43</sup>Fison, op. cit., pp. 195-96.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 221-32, passim.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., pp. 252-53.

volution all creation. There will be nothing forgotten as he who is both Creator and Redeemer brings his work to fruition.

The *parousia*, bringing to fulfillment all creation, will accomplish the resurrection of the dead. Let us remember at this point that the New Testament does not regard as significant the various ideas of inherent immortality of the soul, but is centrally concerned with the resurrection of the body. The Christian is one who being united by baptism with Christ in his death shall also be united with him in his resurrection, though the fulfillment of the promise awaits Christ's coming. J. A. T. Robinson states, "Nowhere in the New Testament has the resurrection of the body anything specifically to do with the moment of death. The key 'moments' for this are baptism and the *parousia*."<sup>46</sup> However, our personal survival does not depend on the body, which in Hebrew, as opposed to Greek and later Western thought, is the instrument of solidarity, not individuation, "but upon the fact that everyone is called by God to a unique and eternal relationship with Himself."<sup>47</sup> So we may say with St. Paul that to die is to be with Christ (Philippians 1:23), but "the dead, just because of their death, do not escape from the sighing and the patience with which we must all await the redemption of our body."<sup>48</sup> There is here no thought of reconstitution of the physical elements of the body, but rather of the fulfillment as opposed to the destruction of nature, and of human solidarity. The resurrection is both social and historical, for

"The building up of the Church is not the gathering of an elect group *out of* the body of history, which is itself signed completely for destruction. It is the resurrection body of history itself, the world as its redemption has so far been made effective. 'The Church is at once the witness to the world of its true nature and the pledge and instrument of its destiny. So Paul sees the redemption of the body begun in the eschatological community of the Spirit (Romans 8) as the hope ultimately, not only of all men, but of 'the creation itself'."<sup>49</sup>

One can hardly escape the universalistic implications of the doctrine of the resurrection, whether or not he accepts them as valid. Whatever conclusions are to be drawn, once again we must not seek to limit

<sup>46</sup>Robinson, J. A. T., op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

either the initiative of God's sovereign love or the freedom of man in which alone is response to that love possible. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive," (I Corinthians 15:22), among a number of other passages, would seem to imply a complete reversal of sin and death. Such concepts as conditional immortality or annihilation, to say nothing of eternal punishment, none of which has any firm and indisputable basis in scripture, seem to imply the defeat of God. Can we assume that the patience of God can be exhausted by his creatures, or that the love of God can be outrun by the rebellion of man, much less that God or the people of God can rest while one human being remains in defiance of his love?<sup>20</sup>

This is not for a moment to deny or even to doubt the utter seriousness of sin and its consequences in human misery. The wrath of God may indeed be his love as seen by the unrepentant sinner, but that is only to add to its severity. Hell exists as the creation of God who is love for those whose imagination it is that they can flee from his presence, yet can there be in all creation any sanctuary from God? Men may live in hell as long as they choose, and there is always the possibility that the choice may be irrevocable, yet this is not to say that God determines that finality. The straight gate and narrow way to heaven is after all that which is too narrow for the Pharises burdened with moral achievement but is nevertheless of ample width for the Publican liberated in his fumbling and inadequate confession. While in the very nature of the case, for it involves the contingency of personal decision which is in itself an expression of God's love, we cannot establish beyond question the validity of universalism, yet there seems to be adequate scriptural support for the doctrine. So we look to the fulfillment in which by virtue of the perfect offering of our Lord and of all things in him "God may be everything to everyone." (I Corinthians 15:28)

Christian eschatology sees in Jesus Christ the Risen Lord the utter triumph of God in all creation. This triumph is not in destruction, nor mere continuation, but rather in regeneration, love creating all things new, that all creation may fully express the love of the Creator, who shall dwell in the unity of restored and perfected creation and in the midst of redeemed humanity.

<sup>20</sup>Baillie, John, *And the Life Everlasting*, pp. 287-294; Guy, H. A., *The New Testament Doctrine of the "Last Things"*, pp. 154, 182, et passim; Robinson, J. A. T., *In the End, God*, pp. 121-23.

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## BOOK NOTES

*The New English Bible (The New Testament, a new English Translation)* (Oxford University Press & Cambridge University Press, 1961—U. S. price \$4.95)

The Christian layman has a right to expect in his Bible accuracy, honesty and clarity, both in the copy he reads in his private devotions at home and in that which is read to him when he goes to Church. For many years he has not been able to attain all three. The familiar King James Version of 1611 has been made hard to understand through the change in our language, and it also lacks something of the accuracy which three centuries and more of biblical study since its appearance

have rendered possible. Of modern substitutes, only that of Smith and Goodspeed had combined the accuracy which scholarship could give with resistance to the temptation to impose a subjective interpretation on the text through their choice of words, and in this case lack of literary brilliance had prevented the general public from embracing it as the answer to the need; it was never authorized for public worship in the American Episcopal Church.

At last the layman's needs have been met. In this translation, prepared by a commission drawn from the Established and the Free Churches of Great Britain, the best results of Bible study have established the text to be translated. Committees chosen with great care have passed upon every word used, and there is no indication anywhere that the translation has been devised to support a particular point of view. At the same time, the New English Bible is easy to understand. When one thinks of St. Paul's tortured phrases it well may be that in this translation he is easier to follow than he was for his living contemporaries who heard his letters. Apart from the Fourth Gospel, most of the well-loved passages of the New Testament have retained their literary greatness while being made understandable to modern readers. It is to be hoped that this year's General Convention will approve the New English Bible for lectern use, for it is easily the most suitable version of the Scripture available to us today.

J. H. W. RHYS

Matthew Black *The Scrolls and Christian Origins* (New York, Scribners, 1961, \$3.95)

It is said in Holy Writ that of making many books there is no end, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. While there does indeed seem to be no end of books on the Dead Sea Scrolls, so far from increasing sorrow this one is pure joy. The author writes clearly and persuasively, taking full account of all earlier work and avoiding the pitfalls into which so many of his predecessors have fallen. All that appears here is based upon sound judgment, and all the questions that may legitimately be asked in the present state of our knowledge receive reasonable answers.

One of the most useful features of the book is the translation of the accounts of the Essenes written by Josephus and by Philo, in Appendix A, and the comparison of the statements of Josephus with those of Hippolytus in Appendix B. Of particular interest is the discussion of

the Qumran Calendar and the Last Supper in Appendix D.

The body of the book is divided into two parts, the first of them giving the most satisfying picture yet developed of the history of the Jewish sect that produced the Scrolls, and the second consisting in three chapters which outline the theology and the practices of the sect, with the addition of the author's summary and conclusions. In this reviewer's judgment the study of the concept of the Messiah which appears in the Scrolls is the high point of the entire work, but it is indeed difficult to single out any one point of primary interest when the whole has so much excellence. Anyone who has read any book on Qumran should read this to correct previous misconceptions. Anyone who is not a specialist in the field may well be satisfied, at least for the present, with the information available to him here.

J. H. W. RHYS

*The Gospel According to Thomas*, prepared by a group of foreign scholars, with English text supervised by Paul Minear, New York, Harper, 1959, \$2.00.

Some fifteen years ago, in Upper Egypt, a library of early Christian texts written in Coptic was discovered. Some scholars have compared its importance for the understanding of early Christianity to that of the library of Qumran, and for certain phases of early Church history and thought this may well be true. The documents themselves, however, are too late in date to account for the origins of the Christian religion: none of them are as early as A. D. 125. For this reason, they have not awakened the same consuming popular interest as have the Dead Sea Scrolls, and there has been no effort to prod the scholars into publication of their findings without meticulous research.

Now the reports on the findings of Nag Hamadi are becoming generally available, and this apocryphal gospel of the second Christian century will be of interest to all for it is the earliest picture of the teaching of Jesus which we possess apart from the canonical Scriptures. The text itself consists in purported sayings and parables of Jesus which were supposedly delivered in secret to the Apostle Thomas. A good proportion of these sayings will already be familiar from the Gospels of Matthew, and Luke, and Mark. The version of the Parable of the Sower, for example, shows no significant alterations from its Synoptic form, and the declaration that Jesus did not come to bring



peace on earth, but rather division, has been merely expanded to include all the features found in the three Synoptic Gospels.

Other sayings and parables have undergone a subtle change which has made them vehicles of Gnostic teaching. In this category must be included the Gospel of Thomas' account of the declaration that no man who does not hate father and mother and brethren and take up his cross can be worthy of Jesus. In the canonical Gospels this appears in slightly varying forms, but here one finds the addition that whoever has known the world has found a corpse and that the world is not worthy of him. In this manner, a declaration of the Gnostic belief that the material creation is in itself evil is ascribed to Jesus. Again, there is annexed to the saying that many who are first shall be last the further assertion that they shall become a single one; this indicates that, for the Gospel of Thomas, man's goal is to become absorbed in the "All," much as in philosophic Hinduism.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting statements in this gospel are those for which no parallel can be found in the New Testament. They do not represent more than one quarter of the whole, and they do not appear to be consistent with the central figure of the Synoptic Gospels. Two examples may be given: "The images are manifest to man, and the Light which is within them is hidden in the Image of the Light of the Father. He will manifest Himself and His Image is concealed by His Light." This is an obscure declaration (or at least obscure to those who are not Gnostics) of the meaning of the Incarnation. Again, "Whoever drinks from my mouth shall become as I am, and I myself will become he, and the hidden things shall be revealed to him." Here one finds the concept of union with Christ carried to the point of absorption of the believer's personality, as it was commonly in Christian Gnosticism.

This is certainly not the Christianity of the New Testament, but it does reveal the influences at work in the world where the New Testament was written, and the attentive reader may find in the Bible intentional correctives of such concepts, and also ways in which the Gnostic vocabulary has influenced the thinking of the New Testament authors themselves. Perhaps when scholarship has added commentary to this text a greater appreciation of its value will be possible.

In the mechanics of publication, one must look upon this book as addressed to technical experts rather than to the general public, for the left hand page contains the printed Coptic text and the right hand one the English translation. There are not many people in America to

whom that left hand page will be of any value. It may be suggested either that the space should be devoted to explanatory notes, or that the cost of setting it up should be saved and passed on to the purchaser. Apart from this, the printing is excellent, its format is attractive, and it offers an easy opportunity for us to become familiar with another strand of Christian archaeology.

J. H. W. RHYS

*A Doctor's Casebook in the Light of the Bible*, by Paul Tournier, New York, Harper's, 1960, pp. 256. \$3.50.

Those who have read Tournier's *Meaning of Persons* will be glad to see this book, which, though first published in 1954, was produced in an American edition only this year.

Tournier, a medical doctor and psychologist of Geneva, reveals himself in *A Doctor's Casebook* as a close and imaginative Bible student whose knowledge of the Bible is often employed in his practice of medicine as a knowledge quite as important as anything learned in medical schools. In the first chapter of this book he writes: "Clearly, any kind of illness raises questions of two quite distinct orders: firstly, scientific—questions concerning the nature of the malady and its mechanism: diagnosis, aetiology, pathogenesis; secondly, spiritual—questions concerning the deep meaning of the illness, its purpose. We may say, then, that every illness calls for two diagnoses: one scientific, nosological and causal, and the other spiritual, a diagnosis of its meaning and purpose." "The first diagnosis," he says, "is objective. . . . The second diagnosis, on the other hand, is subjective. It is the patient himself, and never the doctor, who can make it. . . ."

From that beginning Tournier goes on to discuss what he calls the "Bible Perspective," giving a chapter to the importance of Bible study amongst laymen. He tells of an international conference of doctors meeting at the Ecumenical Institute of Boisy with the common concern "over the insufficiency of modern medical practice, its excessive specialization, the premium placed on technique which makes it less humane. . . ." The group attending the conference (in 1947) began by discussing medicine and experience, "not the Bible and theology," because the group had seen discussions of the latter "divide rather than unite" Christians of the same "confession." After three days of discussions on "Body, mind, and spirit," the group approached Suzanne de Deitrich to ask what the Bible had to say on the subject. The re-

sult was that from the conference there came the discovery of a "method of studying the Bible that was particularly suitable for doctors," and a "most rewarding field of study for laymen."

Then Dr. Tournier proceeds to deal with "The Bible and Science," "Medicine and Nature," "Belief in Magic" (a chapter in itself thoroughly interesting), and a section on "Life, Death, Disease and Healing."

The book must be read a time or two to be fully appreciated, but one thing can be said here assuredly: every parish priest ought to read this book. It might stimulate him to more careful Bible reading from which he might see things in Holy Scripture previously overlooked. It might also give him a few ideas as to the possibilities of the use of the Bible among his people. And last, but not least, it is a good book to put into the hands of physicians, who, though they might be as busy as Dr. Tournier, might be persuaded by him that the Bible does have something to say to them about the practice of medicine.

GEORGE M. ALEXANDER

*Psychology of Religion* by Paul E. Johnson. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1959, (\$5.00).

The author of this book is concerned with the question of what it means to be religious. He uses the insights of psychology as a tool to sharpen and to interpret the religious issues which arise in every man's life. Because religion is a universal human experience it comes to light under many differing forms and with many different cultural colorings. Because all of us are prone to be nearsighted, we frequently mistake our own expression of religion for the one true religion.

Psychology opens no simple way to the understanding of the complexities of religion. One of the reasons is that psychology is a new science and its interpreters represent conflicting schools of thought. Some of these schools, by their own presuppositions, eliminate the possibility of an unprejudiced study of religion. One of the values of this book is in the careful analysis of conflicting psychological viewpoints and methods that promise to throw light on the religious quest.

In the light of these preliminary studies there follows a study of religious experience, an interpretation of religious growth and conversion, an inquiry into Prayer, Devotion, and Worship, and a discussion of faith, doubt, and motivation for religious conduct. The book closes

with a discussion of practical problems such as emotional factors in health, dilemmas of a vocation, and the relationship between religion and community. This work is a most valuable guide for clergy and educational leaders.

VESPER O. WARD

*Liturgical Piety*, by Louis Bouyer, University of Notre Dame Press, 1957, 284 pp.

This is a sympathetic interpretation of the Liturgical Movement rather than a history in detail. However, in interpreting, this volume gives a running account of the ideas and the men which have made the movement a strong, creative force. Bouyer, moreover, goes far beyond a running commentary to achieve a sympathetic, discerning, and critical evaluation of the ideas which in our day have brought vitality to liturgy. This slim volume rather miraculously succeeds in being an inclusive guide to the meaning of Christendom's Western Rite, bringing out the significance of almost every aspect of the Holy Mystery. It evaluates the tendencies of the Baroque style, which governed the liturgy from the fourteenth century forward. It comments penetratingly upon the Hebrew and Patristic backgrounds, the social relevance of the Mass, and the theology of Consecration; and it widens to include the cognate sacraments of Initiation, Ordination, Penance, Unction, and the Nuptial Blessing. Even the Divine Office as adjunct to the Mystery is not neglected. One marvels at the richness of evaluation and interpretation that has been compressed in so small a scope of writing. Few books embrace so many facets of the Movement so creatively.

To an Anglican reading this book, the problems of our brethren of the Roman obedience seem so clearly our own. We have had to wrestle less with the Baroque, but it was brought in, and became our inheritance, by the imitative tendencies of Post-tractarians. Like our Roman cousins, we have had to struggle with an individualism which abrogated the reality of the corporate and social character of liturgy, and we have had to struggle with conservatism in social growth, with the prevailing ethos of "the Tory party at prayer." We had less distance to go, thanks to the weight of the Sarum Tradition in our rite, but this same conservatism, which had kept alive some of the comely fashion of good taste conserved by the Ornaments Rubric, had also bred rubrical phariseism, which in its paranoia threatens any creative liturgical development and reduces the Mystery to a stodgy and unimaginative rendition. Scholars of the Liturgical Movement, in pract-

ice, are always involved in a tension between catholic obedience to authority and the creativeness of liturgical insights. But authority need not be, though it unfortunately sometimes is, *Mort Main*, the dead hand of repressive conventionality. This book should be the source of both liturgical courage and liturgical knowledge, which, of course, are the final answers to undynamic conservatism, whether of the Tractarian or the Evangelical blend.

WILFORD O. CROSS

*The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* by J. Pelikan, Nashville, Abingdon, 1959, \$4.00.

The title of this book is unfortunate, for it conjures up the picture of a Protestant scholar wrestling with the question of how any intelligent and God-fearing person can embrace the Roman system. The reading of five pages, any five, will show that the author has done something much more profound.

Professor Pelikan is a Lutheran, and in his study of Roman Catholicism he has developed a sympathetic insight into the nature of the Roman Church. Catholicism itself he defines as the combination of the principles of *identity* and *universality* in religion. First, he shows the need of early Christianity to become *catholic* in the sense of his definition, and the means by which this catholicity came to be expressed. From this point, he recounts how Western Catholicism became Roman, and tells the story of the Reformation and of subsequent Roman development.

The second section of the book explains the genius of Roman Catholicism. In it are set forth the virtues and the difficulties present in Roman theory regarding the Church, the relation of Church and State, the Sacramental System, devotion to the Virgin Mary, Thomistic thought, and Roman liturgical worship. This treatment is truly perceptive, and it shows in how many ways the genius of Roman Catholicism might contribute to a more effective Protestantism.

The last six chapters are devoted to a theological approach to Roman Catholicism on the part of Protestantism. Here the thesis is that the separation itself is evil, that Rome needs the values of Protestantism, and that Protestantism equally needs those of Rome. The path of conversion in either direction is seen as a blind alley except for particular individuals, because it would mean a loss of the witness of one side or the other. Instead the author feels that each has a responsi-

bility to the other and a debt to the other. The work of the Reformers grew out of the living Christian tradition, as is shown by the use of the Church Fathers in the writings of Luther and Calvin. In the same way, by excommunicating the Reformers Rome denied valid elements of the tradition of Catholicism.

The chief criticism of this book is its failure to give due attention to the variations within what may be called Protestantism. While the variations are acknowledged to exist, nothing is said to the Anglican effort to combine both forms of Christianity apart from the fact that Rome denies its validity. As Pelikan says, concentration upon the study of Scripture and of the Fathers and of the Liturgy is the only road to meeting between Rome and the rest of Western Christendom, but it seems unwise to neglect the guidance of those who have already attempted to follow that road.

J. H. W. RHYS

*The Parables of the Kingdom* by C. H. Dodd. (Revised Edition—New York, Scribners, \$3.50)

Not until the twentieth century did the study of our Lord's parables break the bonds of traditional allegorical interpretation, and for the English-speaking world this was done most effectively in the first publication of Dodd's work some twenty-five years ago. In recovering the real intention of the parables Christians could learn the true meaning of the Lord's teaching about the Kingdom of God. This led to a satisfactory explanation of the eschatology which cannot be separated from the New Testament.

The book has never ceased to be a standard work of reference, but in recent years it has become necessary to relate it to theories and discoveries about early Christianity that have come to light since its first appearance. Now the author himself has performed his task for us. There has been no essential change in his opinions over the years, but in the revised edition we find the necessary references to the work of other scholars by which we may fit it in with our total knowledge.

The new *Parables of the Kingdom* is an appealing book, clear, simple and profound. Its final chapter speaks to the needs of pastors, and of interested laymen, in showing how the act of God in Christ confronts us in the Eucharist and in preaching as well as in the affairs of daily life. We look forward to another quarter-century in which we shall use this work constantly to enhance our appreciation of our religion.

J. H. W. RHYS

## BEQUEST?

In its first hundred years, the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee (our proper corporate title) has received a total of twelve bequests of \$100,000 or more, the largest approximately \$500,000.

Two questions suggest themselves.

1. How could this educational center of the Episcopal Church have survived without these benefactions? (The answer: it couldn't.)

2. What might have been done with Sewanee's imaginative educational philosophy of high excellence and Christian idealism if Episcopalians generally had included the University of the South in their wills? (The answer: it would have realized the founders' ambition that it should be "the greatest university in the world.")

We urge your prayerful consideration. The first step is a memorandum from the prospective testator to his lawyer.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Frank A. Julian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

*Director of Development*

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